



Children in care in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Policy Statement:

The Early Years Foundation Stage framework sets the standards for the learning, development and care that young children should experience when attending a setting outside the family home. Every child should make progress and no child should be disadvantaged.

Little Angels Childcare is committed to offering good quality provision based on equality of opportunity for all children, their families and carers. All staff are committed to doing what they can to enable "children in care" to achieve their potential.

Definition of children in care: Children and young people become "looked after" if they have either been taken into care by the Local Authority, or have been accommodated by the Local Authority (a voluntary care arrangement). Children in care may be placed at home, in foster placements, with relatives / friends or in adoptive placements.

We recognise that children who are in care have often experienced or witnessed traumatic situations. However we also recognise that not all children in care have experienced abuse and there are a range of reasons why children have been taken into care by their Local Authority. Whatever the reason, a child's separation from their home and family signifies a disruption in their lives that impacts on their emotional well-being.

Within our setting we promote secure attachments for children in care and recognise that for these young children to get the most out of educational opportunities, they need to be settled enough with their carer to be able to cope with further separation, a new environment and new expectations made upon them.

Principles:

- The term "looked after child" denotes a child's current legal status; this term is never used to categorise a child as standing out from others. We do not refer to such a child using acronyms such as LAC.
- The post of designated teacher for children in care is statutory for schools, and although this is not a requirement for private, voluntary and independent settings, an all-inclusive and proactive approach driven by a named designated practitioner is good practice, contributing to improving the outcomes for children in our care.
- All members of staff are aware of who the designated person is for children in care.
- Every child in care attending our setting will be allocated a key person.

- We will always consider the arrangements for a child in care attending our setting based on:
 - discussion with the child's social worker and family / carer
 - age of child
 - current emotional needs of the child
 - how long the child has been with the foster carer
 - contact arrangements in place
 - distance of travel for the child
 - whether the child has already been attending our setting prior to coming into care

- The settling in arrangements are very important and may take longer in some cases; where the carer stays alongside the child until it is clear that the child has formed a relationship with his or her key person to allow separation from the carer to take place.

The designated practitioner is:..... Karen Reeves

The designated practitioner will need to:

- Attend or seek training where possible in order to understand the needs of children in care and working in a multi-agency way to support the children.
- Be enthusiastic about promoting inclusive practice.
- Understand how to support children with emotional needs who have experienced loss, trauma and separation.
- Put the EYFS principles into practice, with particular regard to developing an emotional environment that supports the individual needs of the child. Ensure the child has a key person who is able to settle the child into the setting and respond sensitively to their feelings, ideas and behaviour.
- Be up to date with current legislation.
- Work closely with parents/carers, colleagues and a range of outside agencies.
- Contact the social worker if the child's attendance is erratic or infrequent or causes concern.
- Be proactive in seeking advice.
- Attend meetings to work in partnership with carers, the social worker and other professionals and contribute information to the child's Early Years Personal Educational Plan.
- Have a good working knowledge of the Early Years Personal Educational Plan and the EYFS. The PEP should be updated 28 days after the child enters care, then after a 3 month period and again at 6 months and every 6 months thereafter. The PEP should be available for the child's statutory review meeting. The designated Practitioner should be pro-active in supporting the social worker to ensure this educational planning is followed effectively. The designated practitioner ensures that information regarding the child's care, learning and development is accurately recorded and actions taken to ensure the child's holistic needs are identified and met accordingly.
- Work closely with the setting SENCO to ensure that a child's additional learning needs are met. Current S.E.N procedures should be followed with agreement from the carers and social worker.
- Advise and support other practitioners in the setting.
- With guidance from the social worker, ensure records and information regarding the child's learning and development are passed to any receiving school or early years setting on transition. This may require a meeting in the receiving setting involving carers, the social

worker and setting staff within the final weeks of attendance. Effective liaison between settings is vital to ensure continuity for the child.

“Every child deserves the best possible start in life and support to fulfil their potential. Children develop quickly in the Early Years and a child’s experience between birth and 5 have a major impact on their future life chances. A secure, safe and happy childhood is important in its own right. Good parenting and high quality early learning together provide the foundation children need to make the most of their abilities and talents as they grow up.” EYFS 2012

Further guidance:

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage: (DfE 2012)

Pre-School Learning Alliance: Policies and Procedures (2008)

Care Matters: Time for Change (DfES 2007)

This policy was reviewed and adopted by Little Angels Childcare

On 26 August 2014

Signed: